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By- Brown, R.W.; And Others

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The comprehensive report of the activities of the 1953 interdisciplinary seminar in language and culture held at Ann Arbor, Michigan appears here with the working bibliography compiled at the time of the seminar. The report discusses existing text materials, general perspectives, popular conceptions of nationality, objective criteria, implementation, and evaluation, and concludes with recommendations and a summary report. The accompanying bibliography, not originally published with the report, covers general and specific treatments of culture (French, German, Hispanic, and American), national stereotypes, patterning in culture, and pedagogical materials and methods. (AF)

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DEVELOPING CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY; A REPORT OF THE MLA INTERDISCIPLINARY SEMINAR IN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

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R. W. BROWN, J. E. ENGLEKIRK, D. H. FRENCH, M. C. JOHNSTON,
V. H. W. LANGE, A. H. MARCKWARDT, R. L. POLITZER,
A. SOMMERFELT AND B. W. WHEELER

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DEVELOPING CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY: A REPORT OF THE MLA INTERDISCIPLINARY SEMINAR IN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

THE STUDY of foreign languages in the schools and colleges has in the past been justified in many different ways, and without question many reasons can be adduced to support their place in modern education. One argument in their favor which has been advanced more and more frequently is the assertion that foreign languages are not only useful but necessary for an understanding of other peoples and other cultures. This point of view is by no means limited to professional teachers of foreign languages but is to be found among men in public life and in organizations deeply concerned with contemporary educational problems.[1] Despite their variety of source, the statements which have been cited demonstrate a surprising unanimity of attitude in their insistence that a fundamental aim of foreign language instruction is the transmission of what, for lack of a better name, we may call cultural insights.

[1] The following are typical expressions of this attitude: "It is not possible to understand what is in the minds of other people without understanding their language, and without understanding their language, it is impossible to be sure that they understand what is in our minds."—John Foster Dulles, 1 May 1952.

"At this junction in world affairs it has become essential to our national welfare, perhaps even to our survival, that we understand the culture, the psychology, the aspirations of other peoples. Such understanding begins with a knowledge of foreign languages . . . "—Luther H. Evans, 16 April 1952.

" . . . language differences—and the difficulties they may create—are among the big barriers that block the course of understanding. If the peoples of the earth are to meet and move together along the road to a better world for themselves and for their children, they will need to communicate with one another . . . To do this they will need to know more than they know of one another's language."—Mrs. Newton P. Leonard, President of the National Council of Parents and Teachers, 15 January 1953.

"*Whereas*, a great need of our generation is for a wider and deeper understanding of other nations and other peoples, and *whereas*, a knowledge of the language of a people contributes greatly to the understanding of a foreign culture, *be it resolved:* That this Conference recommend that increasing provisions be made for the study and effective teaching of foreign languages and cultures at all levels of American education—elementary, secondary, higher."—Resolution adopted unanimously by the Eighth National Conference on Higher Education, 7 March 1953.

"The true problems facing international cooperation today are not economic or social, but psychological. The best key to their understanding and to their solution is the study of language and literature. Only if we can read what has molded the soul of the chief foreign nations, perceive the secrets of their national character as revealed in their language shall we discard our provincialism and our temptation to frame hasty solutions for very complex questions. Only if we know another language besides our own, and if possible several others, shall we be able to perceive what divides other people from us and also the basic similarities underlying such differences."—Professor Henri Peyre, Yale Univ.

This immediately raises the question: At what point in our foreign language instruction may cultural insights best be developed? It seems clear that on the average no more than ten percent of the students who begin the study of a language in college pursue it beyond the second year. Certainly considerably fewer high-school students continue their studies through the fourth year, which is generally comparable to second-year proficiency in college. There are many reasons for this situation, but the fact remains that, to the extent that the educational aims which have been expressed are valid for a considerable portion of the high school and college population, they must be realized prior to the conclusion of the second college year of foreign language instruction, or its equivalent at other levels of education.

Although it is true that certain cultural insights are transmitted almost at the very outset of the student's contact with a foreign language, very often the first year of instruction is heavily preoccupied with giving him some degree of control of a modicum of vocabulary and a minimal set of language patterns. The second year, then, offers a somewhat greater opportunity for emphasis upon content and attitude rather than the sheer acquisition of a set of skills. Therefore, if the cultural objective is to be realized at all through foreign language instruction, we must think of it as especially pertinent to this intermediate stage of the student's foreign language experience.

There is some reason for believing that, as foreign languages are generally taught today, this cultural objective is not always attained. In 1953, Dean Hollis Caswell, of Teachers College, Columbia University, though expressing himself as being firmly in favor of "greatly extending and deepening our understanding of other cultures and people," and convinced that the "study of foreign languages may be made to contribute to the understanding of other cultures," nevertheless felt compelled to conclude, "but in few schools is this achieved." The same doubt is echoed by others who have been in an equally favorable position to survey the language teaching situation.

To sum up, there is an impressive array of opinion to the effect that foreign language study should contribute to an understanding of other nations and that the present world situation makes this an urgent need. We are not wholly certain how effectively this is being accomplished. We are reasonably sure, however, that this aim must be achieved to a considerable extent before the advanced level of instruction.

The Modern Language Association is currently engaged in a study of the place of foreign languages in American life. Consequently, in view of the expressed purposes of the MLA Foreign Language Program, it seemed that this whole matter demanded further exploration. A memo-

randum prepared by Albert H. Marckwardt of the University of Michigan and addressed to the Executive Council of the Association on 27 December 1952 proposed that an interdisciplinary seminar be established, to study the ways in which these broader cultural purposes of foreign language study might more fully be accomplished. The general tenor of the proposal is indicated by the following excerpts from the memorandum:

> As one senses the present attitude of the Modern Language Association, a large share of its justification of the place of modern language study at all levels of the curriculum is based upon the value of such study in contributing to international understanding by giving the American student an insight into the content, the intellectual framework, and the behavior patterns characteristic of one or more foreign cultures.
>
> Nor are the teachers of modern languages in the United States alone in encountering difficulty with this problem. It is an equally serious one for those agencies of our government who are preparing English-teaching materials for use abroad in our cultural centers and elsewhere, nor have they achieved any singular measure of success in coping with it. It will also arise in connection with the preparation of reading materials in the Program for Oriental Languages, which has recently been undertaken by the American Council of Learned Societies. We are brought face to face with it whenever, in the course of language instruction, we seek to use a newly-acquired language as a tool in trying to acquire an insight into the lives and minds of the people who speak it. It is a problem which would seem to require a frontal attack. This leads us to the pertinent question of what the nature of this attack should be.
>
> In the elementary stages of language instruction, the most fruitful procedure has been to compare the language to be learned with the native language of the learner, in order to determine the points of difference and the areas of similarity.
>
> It is reasonable to assume that our approach to the construction of materials designed to produce a cultural orientation must proceed upon precisely the same basis, namely a comparison of the two national cultures involved, a determination of the principal points of difference between them, and the selection of materials, literary or expository, which will set forth, illustrate, and perhaps account for, the cultural attitudes involved in those points of difference.
>
> At any rate, this matter is so basic to our whole program that we cannot escape making some direct attempt to solve it . . . Moreover, since the systematic analysis of cultures lies within the province of the social sciences, it would seem eminently reasonable that literary and linguistic scholars look to the cultural anthropologist, the social psychologist, the historian, and the political scientist for collaboration and aid in such a project.
>
> In such a seminar, then, a number of leaders in various areas of modern language instruction and a number of social scientists would jointly address themselves to the problem of how to plan for and effect this insight into the culture of another people through the medium of language instruction.

The proposal was approved on 31 January 1953 by the Steering Committee for the Foreign Language Program of the Modern Language Association, and Professor Marckwardt was directed to organize such a seminar to be held at the University of Michigan during the summer of 1953. The present document constitutes the report of the group which was brought together pursuant to these instructions. The seminar began its sessions on 29 June 1953 and concluded them on 24 July.

French, German, and Spanish, in addition to English, were selected as the languages to be represented in the seminar primarily because they reflect the greatest proportion of student enrollment in foreign languages; hence the problem of successfully effecting the transmission of cultural insights to students in our nation's schools is more urgent in them than in some of the less frequently taught languages. There is no reason to suppose that the conclusions reached with respect to these would be greatly modified for Russian, Japanese, Portuguese, Norwegian, or any other modern language.

The group[2] met regularly three hours a day, five days a week during the period of the seminar, and supplementary meetings were held for committee work and special purposes. The first week was devoted to an examination of current textbooks, not only in French, German, and Spanish but for English as a foreign language as well, supplemented by further information concerning language instruction in the elementary and secondary schools. This constituted the introductory phase of the work.

The second and third weeks were primarily cross-educational. During this period the representatives of the social sciences discussed a number of concepts basic to a consideration of cultures and national characteristics, indicating the possibilities and methods of comparing two cultures for points of similarity and difference. The final week of the seminar was integrative and directed toward the practical applications of the principles which had previously been discussed.

This report stresses particularly the matters under discussion during the initial and final phases of the seminar. The concepts and attitudes

[2] The senior participants in the seminar were: John E. Englekirk (Spanish), *Tulane Univ.;* Victor H. W. Lange (German), *Cornell Univ.;* Robert L. Politzer (French), *Harvard Univ.;* Roger W. Brown (Social Psychology), *Harvard Univ.;* David H. French (Anthropology), *Reed College;* Benjamin W. Wheeler (History), *Univ. of Michigan;* Marjorie C. Johnston (Language Teaching, Comparative Education), *U. S. Office of Education;* Alf Sommerfelt (Linguistics), *Univ. of Oslo, UNESCO;* Albert H. Marckwardt (English), *Univ. of Michigan.*

The staff also included as junior assistants, provided by the University of Michigan, Leonard R. Criminale (Spanish), *Ohio Wesleyan,* and James A. Davies (French), *Univ. of Michigan.*

resulting from the cross-educational or interdisciplinary feature of the sessions are implicit, however, in virtually every aspect of the presentation.

Existing Text Materials

The widespread opinion that foreign language study should result in the modification of culture-bound attitudes toward foreign peoples and their ways of life, and the equally prevalent view that these changes in attitude do not now regularly occur as an outcome of such study combine to raise the following question: Do available text materials give evidence of having been planned to achieve this end? If they do give evidence of this kind of planning, any general failure to attain the desired goal must therefore spring largely from faulty classroom presentation. If they do not, a reasonable next step would be to consider the possibility of outlining a procedure whereby a set of aims designed to attain such a cultural orientation might be systematically reached.

Accordingly, the initial phase of the seminar was devoted to examining and analyzing the cultural content of a considerable number of textbooks. The collection thus examined, while in no sense complete, gave a comprehensive view of the types of books having a cultural aim, whether direct or incidental, in all the languages under consideration: French, German, Spanish, and English as a foreign language. Particular attention was given to the books designed for the second-year college courses, although the more advanced college texts as well as some of the most widely used high-school texts were also included. The seminar felt that the coverage was sufficiently broad to lend validity to the generalizations presented here in consequence of this analysis.

On the whole, the existing materials maintain a fairly uniform pattern throughout the various languages. From the point of view of subject matter and approach, there seems to be no appreciable difference between materials designed for use in high school or college. Although there appears to be no dearth either of informative or colorful material intended to illustrate the different foreign cultures, none of the existing texts attempts to present cultural insights in terms of linguistic structure. Very occasionally textbook writers do seek clues to cultural traits in certain language features or patterns, but in the absence of a generally accepted body of knowledge in this area, any such considerations must remain largely speculative.

Texts with some cultural emphasis may be classified according to four principal categories: (1) elementary texts containing auxiliary cultural materials; (2) cultural miscellanies; (3) comprehensive presentations of

a total civilization; and (4) selections of literary material illustrating culture.

1. Auxiliary Material in Elementary Texts and Grammars. The primary aim of this type of selection is to provide practice in reading, composition, and conversation to reinforce the development of linguistic skills. While individual readings here and there throughout the books may be sound and attractive, they seldom reveal in their total effect a clear principle of organization with respect to cultural content. Particularly on the high school level, readings of this type tend to predominate, often overwhelming the student by a multiplicity of unrelated cultural facts.

2. Cultural Miscellanies. General cultural readers, frequently of a descriptive nature, exist on various levels of language difficulty and serve as basic text material for a more or less concentrated treatment of the foreign culture, although in many cases they are actually keyed to linguistic skills rather than cultural objectives. In recent years the pictorial material in these works has assumed an ever-increasing importance. Many such texts are exceedingly attractive in format, lively in approach, and modern in their language, but they tend to draw in a hit and miss fashion upon history, literature, art, folklore, music, customs, politics, etc. Thus they appear to be altogether haphazard in their choice of subject matter and fail, beyond certain considerations of linguistic difficulty, to offer a clear-cut principle of selection. Use of the travelogue form is common, and inevitably this type of text concentrates upon the picturesque or upon insignificant oddities. Although the authors may often be sensitive to cultural differences, they do not attempt to present or develop these differences or contrasts in a systematic or relevant fashion.

3. Comprehensive Presentations of a Civilization. With few exceptions, texts of the "cours de civilisation" type have as their primary aim a panoramic and encyclopedic representation of the factual data of a given culture. Useful though this comprehensive array of facts may be, it can be doubted whether such texts provide sufficient motivation and develop in the student an awareness of significant features and values in the foreign culture. Moreover, these texts frequently reveal a tendency on the part of the compiler to present the data of the foreign culture in as attractive a light as possible and to display a certain evangelistic fervor which sometimes amounts to transparent propaganda. This type of text serves best as a supplementary reference work. Conceivably such material might be presented as effectively in English.

4. CULTURE THROUGH LITERATURE. The purpose of the literary text of this type is to illustrate the manifestations of a given culture through the writings of distinguished men of letters. The material may, of course, be used as well to enlarge the student's literary and artistic sensibilities, to cultivate his stylistic perception, and to acquaint him, incidentally, with the great figures of the foreign literature. Yet purely literary works, selected essentially for their excellence as literature, need not necessarily be concerned with a significant factor of the contemporary culture. Moreover, as these texts confront teacher and student alike with complicated matters of literary taste and criticism, they may lose some of their effectiveness for the immediate purpose of cultural elucidation. The selection in these readers naturally tends to be undertaken from a literary point of view and, as in the general cultural readers, a clearly reasoned definition of purpose seems to be lacking.

The various sorts of cultural text materials differ somewhat in their distribution in the languages represented in our examination. The comprehensive presentation of the civilization, for example, is perhaps more prevalent in the French textbooks. The travelogue has been frequently adapted to the Spanish-speaking Latin American countries. German texts tend to dwell upon the established phases of the political and intellectual history of the country, to which literary specimens are subjoined. A few textbooks in English for foreigners attempt a synthesis of the American way of life, but seem inadequate as cultural carriers. Thus each language area may represent a peculiar and individual situation. But in general, whatever advantages the texts discussed above may have, they appear on the whole to lack a sufficiently clear focus upon the relevant aspects of the foreign culture as contrasted with the student's own experience and value systems.

GENERAL PERSPECTIVE

Up to the present the attempt to provide cultural insights in foreign language classes has been concentrated upon a single broad objective: an understanding of the culture of the foreign country or countries in which the language is spoken. The seminar focused its attention not only on this but on related types of insight.

Even beyond the immediate familiarity with the foreign culture, a heightened comprehension of American life and values should appear as an important derivative of the new perspectives gained about another people. Some teachers occasionally relate American characteristics to the foreign culture, but the acquisition of such an understanding is rarely an overt objective of foreign language courses. Moreover, it is doubtful that existing teaching materials are adequate for this purpose.

It may be questioned, likewise, whether an appreciation either of the foreign or of American culture can be achieved satisfactorily without an understanding of the nature of culture itself—in the general sense. This does not mean that "culture" as such need serve as a topic for classroom discussion. If methods for transmitting the particular insights are adequate, then a comprehension of culture generally should automatically follow.

No longer is the word "culture" limited in its meaning to that which is admirable, superior, or desirable. More often the term is now employed to indicate the whole range of customary activities of the members of a society. There is, indeed, no appreciable difference between this general application of the word and its somewhat more technical use by the social scientists, who may define it as "the learned (not inherited) and shared aspects of the behavior of members of a society." In either case, the material to be dealt with in a cultural description or analysis will not be limited to that which is felt to be great and timeless.

Anyone growing up in a society acquires habits which are shared by those around him. He also learns to avoid modes of behavior not approved by others. The implied set of preferences, of judgments as to what is good or bad, that an individual learns can be called the "values" of a culture. Not only are these learned, but a set of moral convictions about some of them is also acquired.

A person whose entire view of the world is determined by the value-perspectives he has gained through a single cultural environment—who thus cannot understand or accept the point of view of another individual whose values have been determined by a different culture—such a person may be considered culture-bound in his attitudes. He makes premature and inappropriate value judgments. He is limited in his understanding of the world. Consequently, the reduction of a culture-bound attitude becomes an important objective of our educational process.

The understanding of the culture of a specific country is not, in and by itself, all that the cultural aspect of language study should contribute to a general and a liberal education. To achieve the fullest possible contribution, three important ends must be borne in mind in selecting and presenting cultural material: (1) The student must gain an understanding of the nature of culture; (2) his culture-bondage must be reduced; (3) he must achieve a fuller understanding of his own cultural background.

Our collaborative effort has concentrated upon finding the best techniques for reaching these goals. It must be realized that there are no ready-made materials, or even criteria for the selection of materials, that are specifically designed to accomplish the foregoing aims. To attain

them will require considerable ingenuity in combining and devising techniques from various fields and disciplines.

Popular Conceptions of Nationality

Social psychology and sociology provide excellent methods for investigating the conceptions that the people of a nation have of themselves and of one another. A large literature indicates that, except in earliest childhood, the citizens of modern states always have such conceptions.[3] The American, for instance, may describe the German as scientific-minded, industrious, and stolid.[4] The German, in turn, will think of Americans as intelligent and materialistic. These conceptions change as we are forced, from time to time, to re-evaluate our enemies and allies, but they always exist and with a considerable amount of agreement as to their content within a given society at a given time. They are often derived from hearsay, resting either upon pure imagination or loosely interpreted fact rather than from a direct contact, properly evaluated, with the nationality concerned. It is quite obvious from the study by Katz and Braly that many Americans who have never made the acquaintance of a Turk are certain that "the Turk" is cruel, dirty, and sensual.

In general, conceptions of nationality are couched in evaluative, culture-bound terms which would not be used by an objective student of society. To call the Chinese "superstitious," for example, is to say that he holds a set of beliefs concerning the supernatural which we do not share. When we begin to recognize that the practicing Christian may in turn appear "superstitious" to the Chinese, we have acquired a certain degree, at least, of what may be called cultural sophistication.

Sources other than the researches and writings of social scientists may be employed as evidence of nationality conceptions. Popular dramatic presentations, particularly the moving pictures, caricatures and current jokes, the treatment of "foreigners" in newspapers and other periodicals all constitute important information; they are also very difficult to interpret. With such materials, however, one must bear in mind the regional

[3] Space prohibits the publication here of the complete bibliography compiled by the seminar relative to various aspects of the interrelationships between language and culture. For the convenience of readers possibly unfamiliar with some of the social science studies basic to certain sections of our report, these portions are fully documented. The bibliography of the seminar is available in dittoed form upon application to the Executive Secretary of the Association. The present reference is to H. Meltzer, "Development of Children's Nationality Preferences, Concepts, and Attitudes," *Journal of Psychology*, XI (1941), 327–336.

[4] D. Katz and K. Braly, "Racial Stereotypes of One Hundred College Students," *Jour. of Abnormal and Social Psychol.*, XXVIII (1933), 280–290.

variations within a country and also the tendency of the public taste to demand that the mass media concentrate on the strange and adventurous. These media will not always convey accurately the over-all nationality conception.

Other available sources would be quantitative data on book sales and public library circulations representing the literature of the foreign country or books from whatever source dealing with the foreign country, the former category presumably to be limited to material translated into the language of the home country. In evaluating such information as an indication of the nationality conception, we should be aware, however, that selection for translation appears to be determined by a complex of factors not always fully understood and does not, for that reason, represent an altogether free choice according to an independent public taste.

Descriptions of national characteristics are also to be found in the impressions of travelers and the epitomizations of untrained observers. Authors in this category will often profess to present the "truth" about a nationality. In many instances it will be apparent from the vocabulary used that the notions thus presented are provincial, sometimes even chauvinistic. The inadequacy of such impressionistic studies can be shown by comparing them with methodologically more advanced work. Nevertheless, they may, in turn, be re-interpreted as representing culture-bound impressions of foreign nationalities.

Using existing cultural conceptions as a starting point is not the only way of selecting from the unlimited storehouse of cultural materials those which are significant. Another approach, which can be used in conjunction with the first, is that of stressing those aspects of the foreign culture which the residents of that country feel to be important. For example, if the particular foreign people believe themselves to be romantic, or generous, or moral, or practical, and feel that this trait is commonly misunderstood, then possibly this self-conception should be taken into consideration.

Contemporary events suggest that popular nationality stereotypes, including national self-conceptions, are inadequate cognitive tools for meeting international responsibilities. The language teacher who undertakes to develop soundly based cultural sensitivity cannot be content merely to perpetuate the stereotypes. Some cross-cultural perspective is essential to the communication of cultural insights that are not simply nationalistic projections. Aware of the German's view of the American as well as the American's view of the German, we are compelled to look for ways of conceptualizing national differences which will be free from cultural bias. For this we must naturally turn to the more objective studies of culture. Nevertheless, it can be helpful to begin with existent

nationality stereotypes because they spot areas of misunderstanding and possible contention, thus providing a principle of choice among cultural items that could be presented, even though they fail to supply acceptable terms for the interpretation of such items.

Objective Criteria; Methods and Results

An objective comparative analysis of the cultures of the two countries concerned gives us a reliable basis for arriving at similarities and differences. Such a comparison should reveal significant facts about the cultures beyond those discovered by other methods. Covert aspects of the cultures, for example, may be discoverable only through the use of carefully and subtly devised objective techniques.

Existing studies of American culture will naturally be of value in making comparisons with any foreign country. These studies are diverse but often most suitable for our purposes. A brief summary of the types of sources follows; this will also suggest the nature of the material to be used or created for any foreign country.

The best materials are those based upon explicit research, carefully controlled as to method. Periodicals such as the *American Journal of Sociology* and the *American Sociological Review* contain many excellent studies, usually of specific aspects of American life. There are also more extended works on such specific features, as well as a few studies which aim at a comprehensive coverage of America.[5]

Community studies have a long history in American social science, some of them having attained the substantial position of "classics" in the field.[6] New problems and the development of new methods to deal with them have extended the use of this approach.[7]

The technique known as content analysis, which is represented in a growing literature, promises to be one of the most useful methods for the verification of hypotheses relevant to the problem of cultural comparisons. It is, for example, adapted to the comparative study of themes as patterns.[8] Today a distinction is usually made between the culture of a people and the shared or modal aspects of their "personalities." Studies of the personality or national character of literate peoples have proved

[5] See, e.g., Robin M. Williams, Jr., *American Society, a Sociological Interpretation* (New York, 1951).

[6] Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown, a Study in Contemporary American Culture* (New York, 1936) and *Middletown in Transition, a Study in Cultural Conflicts* (New York, 1947).

[7] Lloyd Warner, *Yankee City Series*, Vols. I–IV (New Haven, 1941–47); James West, *Plainville USA* (New York, 1945).

[8] See p. 1208, below.

highly controversial, but they exist for America[9] as well as for many other countries.

To be used with caution is a wide range of writings by enlightened observers who have no explicit methodology for analyzing contemporary cultures. Literary critics, certain historians, journalists, and men in public life often produce stimulating and valuable studies which should not be overlooked.[10] Indeed, much of the data for modern European countries will be found in just such sources. In general the observations of these writers may be accepted provisionally as a series of hypotheses, to be subjected to careful analysis and verification.

The source materials which have been mentioned and the experiences of those familiar with the country supply data for the understanding of the areas of culture chosen as significant. To make certain that no important aspect is overlooked, there are various research aids that can be employed. Murdock's *Outline of Cultural Materials*[11] consists of an elaborate series of cultural categories which is used as the basis of the *Cross-Cultural Index*. Techniques and categories are discussed in a handbook published by the Royal Anthropological Institute[12] which is designed to aid those with little experience in studying a particular facet of a culture to ask properly detailed and comprehensive questions concerning it. A very different sort of work is that of Hall and Trager,[13] which applies the viewpoint and certain methods of structural linguistics to the study of culture. The authors' conceptual scheme provides a number of analytic tools which, although yet untested, appear promising. This work can be used to construct checklists to assure the adequacy of the understanding of an aspect of culture.[14]

[9] Margaret Mead, *And Keep Your Powder Dry* (New York, 1942); Geoffrey Gorer, *The American People, a Study in National Character* (New York, 1948), a much criticized book.

[10] John W. Chase, ed. *Years of the Modern, an American Appraisal* (New York and Toronto, 1949).

[11] George P. Murdock et al., *Outline of Cultural Materials*, 3rd rev. ed. (New Haven, 1950).

[12] *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*, Royal Anthropological Inst. of Great Britain and Ireland, 6th ed. (London, 1951).

[13] Edward T. Hall and George L. Trager, *The Analysis of Culture*, private pre-publication edition (Washington, 1953).

[14] The following checklist, suggested in part by Hall & Trager, pp. 16, 17, would serve as a practical guide to a consideration of the *economic* aspects of the life of a particular people. Similar lists could be framed to deal with *education, recreation, government, occupations*, etc.

Advertising, Auctions, Trading, Monetary systems (their vocabulary), Banks and banking practices (cashing checks), Fixed price systems vs. bargaining, Installment buying, Pawnshops, Dowries, Other monetary aspects of marriage, Employment of women, Stock exchange, Shopping centers, Country stores, Super markets, Open markets (direct sale

In the analysis of selected facets of a culture, certain obvious structures such as institutions, associations, and cultural complexes will be encountered.[15] Beyond these, however, are *patterns* or configurations, which are structural regularities of even greater importance for our purposes. Patterns cut across more than one aspect of a culture and serve to integrate diverse materials. The term "value orientation" has been used for one type of pattern related to values. A very similar concept is that of cultural "themes," an old idea which has recently been given an exact definition.[16] Opler uses the term "theme" in a technical sense to denote a postulate or position, declared or implied, and usually controlling behavior or stimulating activity, which is tacitly approved or openly promoted in a society.

Although Opler formulates his themes as postulates, they can also be given short headings such as "success," "competition," "ritual cleanliness," etc. Any culture has a limited number of themes, and these can be identified at almost any stage of the analysis. Once a theme is assumed to exist, special efforts can be made to establish its existence and importance by such methods as noting how many diverse kinds of cultural materials are patterned by it.

These broad, integrative concepts have certain advantages. We need

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from farmer), Department stores, Drug stores, Day of the week selected as market o' shopping day, Sunday business, Gambling, Government lotteries, Monopolies and trusts Anti-monopoly legislation.

[15] During the course of the seminar, working definitions of these terms and others were suggested. In summary: (1) a unit of culture, as defined by an observer, is a *culture trait.* (2) When a group of traits is customarily found together, the whole can be called a *culture complex.* (3) When the culture of a given region is fairly homogeneous as contrasted with adjacent regions, one is dealing with a *culture area.*

Other methods of analysis start with stable sub-sections of a society. (4) *Institutions* are a complex of rules, values, and culturally prescribed personnel. (5) *Statuses* are positions in a society, and *roles* are activities appropriate to these statuses. (6) Stable, ranked divisions of a society are *social classes.* (7) Groupings such as clubs with relatively specific, limited interests are called *associations.* The categories which have just been defined are structural for the most part, and are often studied in conjunction with the *functions* which they perform. Another method of analysis concentrates on the *processes* found in a society or culture. More than a mere system of terminology is involved here. Techniques for identifying processes and structures, exploring functions, and relating these to each other are of utmost importance in developing a rigorous and objective approach to social phenomena.

[16] Morris E. Opler, "Themes as Dynamic Forces in Culture," *Amer. Jour. of Sociol.*, LI (1945), 198–206; "Rejoinder," *Amer. Jour. of Sociol.*, LII (1946) 43–44; "An Application of the Theory of Themes in Culture," *Jour. of the Washington Acad. of Sciences*, XXXVI, V (1946), 137–166 (the theory is applied to Lipan Apache culture; some general discussion); "Some Recently Developed Concepts Relating to Culture," *Southwestern Jour. of Anthrop.*, IV, ii (1948), 107–122.

not bewilder the student by the presentation of a large number of individual traits. A few well-chosen items can make him aware of the existence of the pattern. There are generally not many patterns of the theme type in a given culture. Consequently, all those that can be identified are worth considering as points of primary importance about which teaching materials may well be organized. Very often they will fall in the very areas that the examination of national stereotypes has already suggested as highly significant.

Implementation

With the above techniques of analysis and tools for research, it should be possible to determine significant and relevant patterns and traits of a given culture—French, German, Spanish, American, etc. The next essential step is to employ such a body of cultural data in arriving at a reasoned determination of cultural objectives (appropriate types of cultural insights) for the different levels of language instruction and a clear direction of effort toward the attainment of those objectives.

The important cultural differences, as these are popularly conceived, will not usually involve the geographical detail or the piquant customs in dining and clothing which fill so many textbooks. Any misunderstanding between America and a foreign nation is more likely to center in a disagreement on values—a kind of disagreement that is often only skirted by the reading materials we now have. The bland travelogue that avoids such ticklish matters provides a conception of the foreign culture which the student may reject because of its obvious bias, or which he may accept until more extended experience disillusions him. By avoiding such controversial matters, the language teacher or textbook author not only fails to do justice to the culture, but in addition he deprives students of a subject matter which they might find of deep personal interest.

This leads us to the determination of the illustrative material that should go into the composition of a given text. Obviously no single textbook can attempt to illustrate the entire body of patterns and traits representative of a culture. In the selection of content and method, the writers of textbooks and other instructional materials, including the audio-visual, will need to bear in mind such questions as the following:

1. Does the material focus upon characteristic and significant aspects of the foreign culture?
2. Can the material be so organized that the student will leave the course with a fairly clear idea of some salient aspects of the foreign culture?
3. In using this material, can important traits or themes be compared or contrasted with typically American behavior? And can this be done in a manner leading to a better understanding of American life?

4. Is the student stimulated to search for historical or other explanations for values which differ from his own?
5. Do the materials foster an awareness of the validity of the mode of life in any given society?.
6. Is the material free from dubious or undesirable value judgments?
7. Does the material lead by implication to a clearer understanding of the nature of culture in a general sense?

Illustrative materials may be drawn from (1) the literature of a given culture, (2) accounts by native or foreign observers, either trained or untrained, (3) periodical writing of an expository or argumentative nature, (4) historical writings, and (5) travel literature. If appropriate materials are not available in any of the above or other types of sources, recourse to the essay written for the special purpose will be inevitable.

The presentation of these materials need not be entirely in contemporary terms. Whenever it is possible to find suitable selections which will account for the trait or behavior pattern on historical grounds, these will lend variety and depth in approach.

Brief introductory comments in English should suggest to the student the relevancy of a given American trait and should point up the nature and the significance of the passage that follows. Purely factual information that may be considered necessary for a fuller understanding of the text should be relegated to the notes. To achieve a greater involvement of the student, study questions, preferably in the foreign language, should call for reflection in the attempt to heighten his appreciation and understanding of our own as well as of the foreign way of life. Illustrations, supplementary exercises, outside readings in English and in the foreign language, and in general the treatment and presentation of the material will vary considerably from text to text, depending on level and type.

Evaluation

This seminar has been concerned with the development and clarification of general principles relating to the development of cultural insights through foreign language study, which we hope will have practical application. In addition, we have attempted to indicate how these general principles should be translated into textbooks and teaching methods. Whoever undertakes to do this will necessarily be concerned also with evaluating the effectiveness of the changes thus introduced. We hope that changes in materials and methods will give our students some valid insights into the life and thought of another people and act as a corrective to cultural bias. How, then, will their behavior differ from that of present-

day students? What will be the consequences of these new attitudes and modes of understanding?

The experimental evaluation of teaching methods and materials is a familiar practice in educational psychology. Like an Arrowsmith conducting a controlled experiment with a new serum, the teacher with his new materials and devices must exempt some subjects from treatment if the usefulness of the innovations is to be determined. He must, in fact, maintain a control group matched with his experimental group in all relevant dimensions except that one—in this case the proposed teaching materials—whose effects are to be charted.

It is generally easier to test for the attainment of the more familiar goals of language teaching than for attitude changes. Language teachers have traditionally been concerned with three kinds of objectives:

1) The acquisition of language skills: reading, translation, composition, oral expression, aural comprehension. These are the skills which are commonly tested.
2) The acquisition of cultural facts. We test less regularly for factual knowledge of cultural materials, which may help explain why students often pay little attention to the content of cultural readers. We do know, however, how to test for this kind of subject matter.
3) The appreciation of a foreign literature. Here we are likely to have in mind something more subtle than we can easily test. Knowledge of the names of authors, the plots of plays, the opening lines of poems are imperfect indices of that literary sensitivity which we hope to develop; critical essays, though more penetrating and subtle, are difficult to evaluate objectively.

The language course which aims directly at developing cultural insights of the type envisaged in this report moves beyond mere cultural fact into the realm of cultural understanding. We expect this to result in changed attitudes and sympathies on the part of our students—psychological subtleties that will require great experimental ingenuity if they are to be adequately appraised. Several techniques might be used in assessing these changes:

1) On the level of language skills, we may eventually be less interested in the student's ability to translate than in his ability to recognize what is not translated or translatable. Instead of asking him to render French into English, we may ask him to point out what is lost as the French passes over into English. A perceptive reading in the light of a broadened cultural understanding may reveal aspects of the French mind that do not always come across in translation. In this way we can illustrate the imperfect translatabil-

ity of languages instead of promoting notions of simple equivalence that make some aspects of the study of language seem trivial.

2) The direct verbal test. Questionnaires and rating scales for measuring nationalistic attitudes and cultural bondage are already in existence. They may be of some value. It seems likely, however, that the intent of such material is too obvious for many college students. After a very few class hours, the astute student can easily assume the attitudes that will please his teacher.
3) The indirect verbal test. One possibility here is the employment of creative materials in which the student composes stories or essays, and his writings are evaluated for the cultural understanding they reveal. Materials for such tests can be selected in such a way that it will be impossible to guess the purpose of the measure. It would be best to administer these tests somewhere other than in the language class, so that the student will not be motivated to simulate the attitudes of the teacher. Thus, for example, students in a class in social studies or in English might be asked to write a composition discussing the frequent changes in the French government. The performances of the control and experimental groups could then be compared for the cultural understanding displayed. The techniques of content analysis make it possible to do the job reliably and to determine the statistical significance of the results. The tester will have to depend upon the help of the language teacher in the creative task of devising situations and asking questions to serve as the basis for the content analysis. It will be important here to examine not only the understanding of the particular foreign culture, but in addition the attitudes held toward America itself and toward alien cultures in general.
4) The action level. This is perhaps the most important level to be examined, but it is also difficult to control experimentally. How does the proposed course in Spanish, for example, affect the students' reading of Spanish novels, their attendance at Spanish movies, and, very significantly, their dealings with Spanish-speaking people? The election of additional courses in Spanish and in cognate areas, expanded travel plans, choice of vocation, etc., might be indications of a growing understanding of Hispanic culture.

The detailed problems of experimental design—the selection of a sample and the experimental controls—have not been discussed here because these questions have already been encountered many times and have been dealt with satisfactorily. Our principal concern has been with the creative aspects of the evaluation process, in which the collaboration of the social scientist and the language teacher is necessary.

Language Study as a Means of Developing Cultural Insights

While the importance of achieving cultural insights within any program of American education cannot be denied, the question remains whether such insights can be effectively transmitted in the foreign language class, and if so, whether this can be done in a language class any more effectively than elsewhere. There seems little doubt that language is an important tool in the understanding of culture, but as we pointed out earlier, foreign language study is itself being increasingly advocated as the appropriate means by which cultural insights can be established and sharpened in the students.

The question may be considered on both a theoretical and a practical basis. In dealing with the problem theoretically, we may begin by recognizing the existence of a popular or naive view that reality presents itself to all men in the same form, and that all languages are sets of codes for expressing this single reality. From such a concept arises the assumption of complete or nearly complete translatability; all that is necessary is to substitute the relevant parts of one code for another, let us say English for Italian, and precisely the same message will be conveyed.

A study of non-Indo-European languages casts considerable doubt upon this assumption. The Navaho, for example, have one word for the colors that we call gray and brown. Totonac, a Mayan language, has distinct forms of the verb *to be* for subjects that are sitting, standing, or lying. Hupa, a language of northern California, has tenses for its nouns, and can thus distinguish by means of inflectional endings alone between a house now existing, one in ruins, and one not yet built. Hopi, by virtue of its verb forms, is better equipped to deal with vibratory phenomena than is English or any other western European language. In short, a linguistic system is an expression, though not a complete one, of the system of perception which a social group has of its surroundings and of itself.

It is true, of course, that the linguistic structures of the principal European cultures are to a great extent similar and that an attempt to establish discriminating insights based upon purely structural features is not likely to yield tangible results, but the lexical differences are considerable and can be more easily interpreted.

The lexicon of a language is a remarkably revealing inventory of the culture of the people who natively speak the language. There certainly is a relationship of approximate translatability between many lexical items in the various modern European languages. Students are likely to mistake this for a relationship of perfect translatability—a view that is reinforced by the presentation, in standard textbooks, of long lists of supposedly equivalent items of vocabulary. It is quite true, of course, that

the French word *mère* is a translation of the English word *mother*. If, however, meaning is broadened beyond simple denotation to include the emotional and cognitive associations which are not purely personal but common to all the participants in a culture, then it is clear that the translation is only approximate. For such abstractions as "truth" and "goodness" the untranslated residue is likely to be greater. To comprehend a language fully, one must share in the culture of the people who speak it. Foreign languages are not alternative codes for the familiar American reality. The language teacher who wants to convey not only the code but also its meaning cannot avoid interpreting the foreign culture, and in doing this effectively, he will illuminate the general nature of culture itself.

The importance of language for the real understanding of culture is being more and more felt by students of civilization. No civilization can be fully understood by one who ignores its linguistic means of expression. Modern anthropologists cannot work any more through interpreters if they want to collect reliable material. In general, language mastery has come to be a necessary prerequisite for participation in an area study program. Finally, there can be little doubt that in the areas of greatest intellectual and artistic subtlety, in the works of the poets and philosophers, knowledge of the language in which they are written is an absolute essential for a full comprehension.

Turning to more practical considerations, it seems that there is at the present time no place in the high-school or college curriculum where a systematic attempt is regularly made to give the student a well-directed insight into a particular culture other than his own. Basic courses in the social sciences are generally concerned with presenting analytic tools and comparative data rather than an acquaintance with a particular culture. History, though it contains some of the materials for the interpretation of a particular culture and provides indispensable perspectives, is by definition not primarily concerned with providing a comparative insight into contemporary cultural values.

As a rule, the language teacher is, by his familiarity with materials of the foreign culture, in a position of decided advantage. Given an awareness of the comprehensive cultural purposes described above and an acquaintance with the methods by which these insights can be attained, he can make a most effective contribution to an understanding of the major problems of human relationships that confront us today.

Recommendations

Our meetings this summer constituted an initial attack, in terms of general principle, upon an educational problem which seemed to us of

primary importance. This concern with a broad over-all point of view, since it was conducted on an interdisciplinary basis, led us into a number of hitherto unexplored or at best very casually explored areas, and by the very nature of the situation, we were forced to ask many questions which we could not hope to answer definitively. This method of operation places upon us the responsibility of suggesting subsequent projects and further avenues of investigation. They may be considered under three headings: workshops, teacher training, and problems for future research.

1. WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS. The obvious next step is to suggest ways of achieving, in terms of one or more specific languages, the educational aims which have been presented here. This will undoubtedly be more effectively accomplished through a series of seminars and workshops, each composed principally of teachers concerned with one particular language, than through so broadly diffused a group as constituted the present seminar. Ideally, three workshops should be arranged for the summer of 1954, in French, German, and Spanish, the primary purpose of each to be the creation of second-level teaching materials for that language, which would be designed to achieve an insight into the culture of the foreign country.

As an initial phase of activity, the essential elements of the culture of the speakers of that language should be analyzed and compared with the corresponding elements in our native culture. Such a cultural analysis and the subsequent evaluation of the various points of difference would have to be undertaken with the assistance of area specialists; thus the first stage of the workshop would be interdisciplinary in its operational scheme. These activities should result in the formulation of objectives (in terms of cultural insights) for the three languages.

The second stage of the workshop will be bibliographical, with the language teachers assuming the principal responsibility for the activities of the group and the social scientists serving principally as resource personnel. Various types of reading selections containing the key attitudes which have been selected as teaching objectives should be sought out, and in each instance the particular selection must also be judged in terms of its level of reading difficulty. Those selections which are too difficult and which will lend themselves to simplification must be rewritten. For each course also the various objectives must be organized into the sequence which will lend itself to most effective presentation. Further stages in the workshop will deal with the formulation of study questions, conversational materials based upon the reading selections, and tests of the material to be presented.

These workshops could be organized according to any one of several

possible patterns. They could be sponsored by a language teachers' association or a state educational agency. Probably the most feasible arrangement would be to establish them as a part of the regular summer instructional program of a college or university, carrying academic credit for those students who desire it. Each workshop should be under the direction of a well-qualified representative of the language-teaching profession, preferably one who has had some contact with the present seminar. Another possibility would be to include in the personnel of a single workshop both teachers of a particular foreign language and teachers of English to native speakers of that language, with the idea of creating cultural materials for the teaching of both the foreign language and of English.

Ideally each workshop would be provided with approximately ten summer fellowships, carrying stipends sufficiently attractive to encourage the best high-school and college teachers to apply for them. Moreover, in order to assure actual field trials of the materials devised in connection with the workshops, the institutions employing the teachers who are given fellowships should guarantee the use of such materials in their classes for a two-year period.

It would be well to divide each workshop into two parts. The first, in which the general principles of intermediate language teaching for the purpose of cultural orientation are set forth, should be open to any qualified student. The second, more directly concerned with the construction of teaching materials and tests, should be limited to students receiving the fellowships. Any workshop organization should provide teacher training for a qualified group, result in a set of materials, and assure their being put into use.

2. Teacher Training. No matter how deftly or ingeniously text materials may be constructed, they will not achieve their aim without teachers who can employ them intelligently and sympathetically. And even if we must get along for some time without the materials which we have envisaged, the training of foreign language teachers in the direction of a greater cultural understanding would still be a desirable end in itself.

Considering that language exists only in a society, that in fact it constitutes the unifying force which holds a society together, we believe that those disciplines which have as their chief function the study of man as a social being have much to contribute toward our understanding of language. All too frequently the humanist views language as the vehicle for a highly restricted kind of communication, important and exalted though it may be, and concentrates upon the employment of that language by a small minority of gifted individuals, overlooking its potentialities as a reflection of the total culture of those who speak it.

Moreover, if a primary aim of the study of a foreign language is to overcome the misunderstandings and tensions which exist between or within nations, we cannot neglect those aspects of the study of man which are concerned with the whole social structure. The conclusion seems obvious: the teachers of foreign languages will find certain concepts, attitudes, procedures, and factual information drawn from the social sciences useful to them in their work.

The practical question is where, in an already crowded curriculum, such training can be included. Certain solutions may be suggested. Students preparing to teach foreign languages might well be encouraged to elect social science courses as cognates, or a suitably constructed interdepartmental social studies program as a teaching minor. The courses in teaching methods or other parts of the required professional training could be revamped to include those concepts and attitudes drawn from the social sciences which we believe will make for more effective teaching. The social science departments might well be asked to prepare a collaborative service course designed for teachers of language. On the graduate level, and also for those engaged in college teaching, collaborative or interdisciplinary seminars could be established. The Modern Language Association could perform a useful service by preparing a pamphlet which would explain the bearing of the social sciences upon the teaching of foreign languages. It would be distinctly helpful, also, for the Association to insist upon the need for group planning and close cooperation with educators who are confronted with the broad problems of educational objectives, integration of subject matter, and student guidance.

3. RESEARCH. Much of our discussion throughout the seminar was less definitive than we should have liked simply because certain kinds of information are not available. This suggests the desirability of further research in a number of areas. Certain basic or fundamental matters have not yet been dealt with adequately, and in addition many practical questions remain unanswered.

The following have occurred to the seminar as presenting opportunities for further study. As problems for basic research we suggest:

1. Exploration of the relationship between language and thought, with particular reference to European languages (to be carried out by a linguistic scientist and a psychologist in collaboration).
2. Problems of translatability. What can be satisfactorily translated from one language to another and what is incapable of translation?
3. Inquiries into the nature of foreign cultures, particularly those which are within the orbit of the Indo-European languages, employing the techniques which have been used in analyses of American life. This would envisage the extension to other countries of such compilations as Gardner Murphy's

In the Minds of Men, which presents a well-founded picture of India as it now exists.

4. Comparisons of values and culture patterns between various national states.
5. Inquiring, country by country, into the value reorientations resulting from foreign experience. Exchange students and teachers would be excellent subjects for this kind of research.
6. Extension of content analyses to more foreign literatures.

No strict line can be drawn between the so-called basic and applied research, but the following questions seem to have immediate applicability to the foreign-language program we propose.

1. Why has not a knowledge of a foreign language and contact with a foreign people heretofore resulted in attitudes which are less culture-bound?
2. What ways can we devise to test the kinds of teaching materials we seek to develop?
3. What kinds of materials are chosen for translation from one language to another, and what are the factors determining this choice?
4. What further bibliographical resources would be most useful to the teacher of foreign languages, and how can they be made available?

This is not an exhaustive list, but it will serve to indicate the directions of activity that would make for more effective teaching of foreign languages if they are to perform the educational function that our position in world affairs clearly demands.

Respectfully submitted,

ROGER W. BROWN
JOHN E. ENGLEKIRK
DAVID H. FRENCH
MARJORIE C. JOHNSTON
VICTOR H. W. LANGE
ALBERT H. MARCKWARDT
ROBERT L. POLITZER
ALF SOMMERFELT
BENJAMIN W. WHEELER

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BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MATERIALS ON CULTURAL ANALYSIS AND THE CULTURAL ASPECTS OF MODERN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

In July 1953 the Modern Language Association with the assistance of the University of Michigan sponsored an Interdisciplinary Seminar in Language and Culture, held at Ann Arbor. The purpose of the seminar was to study ways in which instruction in a foreign language might serve as a means of fostering an understanding of the life and culture of the people who speak it. A comprehensive report of the activities of the seminar appears in the December 1953 issue of PMLA. Since the seminar concerned itself to a considerable degree with matters usually considered as belonging to the fields of education and the social sciences, a rather extensive bibliography was compiled, chiefly as an aid to those members of the seminar representing the humanistic disciplines. Because of its length, it scarcely seemed feasible to include the bibliography in the body of our report.

The members of the seminar are happy, however, to employ this means of disseminating their working bibliography to those members of the MLA who find themselves interested in the general topic which they studied. The bibliography makes no pretension to completeness but simply lists the works which seemed pertinent and helpful during the course of our discussions. The final division of the bibliography, devoted to pedagogical and methodological matters, is presented chronologically because of its length.

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V. PEDAGOGICAL MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

In this section of the bibliography, abbreviations will be regularly employed for the following journals as indicated:

ED - EDUCATION	MDU - MONATSHEFTE FÜR DEUTSCHEN UNTERRICHT
FR - FRENCH REVIEW	MLJ - MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL
GQ - GERMAN QUARTERLY	SS - SCHOOL AND SOCIETY
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